

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and reconsideration of the application identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.111 and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 34-36 contain allowable subject matter (Official Action at page 7).

By the above amendments, the specification has been amended at page 12 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. In addition, claim 34 has been amended to be in independent form by incorporating the subject matter of claim 20. Indication of the allowance of independent claim 34 is believed to be in order in light of such amendment, and such action is respectfully requested.

In the Official Action, claim 41 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for the reasons set forth at pages 2-3 of the Official Action. In this regard, it is respectfully submitted that support may be found for claim 41 at least at page 7, lines 9-10 of the present specification. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 20-31, 38 and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the English translation of Japanese Patent Document No. 10-333154 (*JP '154*). Claim 37 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *JP '154*. Withdrawal of the above rejections is respectfully requested for at least the following reasons.

JP '154 fails to disclose or suggest the use of a photochemically stable azodye as recited in independent claim 20. In this regard, the Patent Office has taken the position that the photochemically stable characteristic of the azodye "does not preclude a reversible change as recited in [*JP '154*]" (Official Action at page 6). However, as discussed in the previous response, the photochemically stable azodye refers to a substance that, when exposed to light,

does not undergo a structural change within a molecule. In stark contrast, the compounds employed in *JP '154* undergo a reversible change in their molecular structure upon optical exposure and are referred to as optically activated molecules. Note paragraph [0018] and [0020] on page 6 of the machine translation. While *JP '154* specifies that the molecular structural change is reversible, such change is nevertheless a structural one within a molecule. The recited photochemically stable characteristic excludes such compounds of *JP '154* which undergo a reversible change in their molecular structure upon optical exposure. Thus, it is clear that the azo compounds disclosed by *JP '154* are not the same as or suggestive of the recited photochemically stable azodye.

For at least the above reasons, it is apparent that *JP '154* neither anticipates nor renders obvious the method of claim 20. Accordingly, withdrawal of the above rejections is respectfully requested.

The specification stands objected to for the reasons set forth at pages 5-6 of the Official Action. Without addressing the propriety of this objection, and in an effort to expedite prosecution, the specification has been amended to delete the objected-to wording set forth in the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 1. Furthermore, as discussed in the Amendment filed May 1, 2006, Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would clearly recognize that the word "photo-chromic" at page 12, line 18 of the original disclosure, was erroneously used. However, in an effort to expedite prosecution, the specification has been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

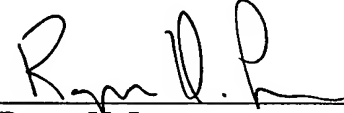
From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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